UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/817,203	03/27/2001	Masumi Yoshino	205114US2	7892

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EXAMINER
BLAIR, DOUGLAS B

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2142	

NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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PTOL-90A (Rev. 04/07)

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	09/817,203	YOSHINO ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Douglas B. Blair	2142	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *15 May 2007*.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL.**   2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-5, 9-26 and 30-38* is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-5, 9-26 and 30-38* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☐ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application

6)☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1.   Claims 1-5, 9-26, and 30-38 are currently pending in this application.

Response to Arguments

2.   Applicant's arguments, see Remarks, filed 5/15/2007, with respect to the prior art

rejections based on Sullivan and not Grewal have been fully considered and are persuasive.

Those rejections have been withdrawn. The arguments against Grewal are not persuasive.

Grewal clearly shows initiating an email exchange in Figure 3 and col. 3, lines 53-65. The user

is clearly able to input an email address. The applicant's claim amendment can be interpreted

two ways: (a) that the input email address is that of the user or (b) that the input email address is

that of the support personnel. Either way Grewal reads on this broadly claimed limitation. In

situation "a" the user's email address has to input in some way otherwise the expert would not be

able to respond to the user's question. In situation "b" the user inputs the email address of the

expert in the form of choosing that expert's hyperlink (see col. 3, line 38).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in
> section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are
> such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person
> having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the
> manner in which the invention was made.

4.   Claim 1-5, 9-24, and 30-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable

over U.S. Patent Number 6,691,159 to Grewal et al. in view of U.S. Patent Number 6,477,531 to

Sullivan et al.

5.   As to claim 1, Grewal teaches an online support method that gives online support to

eliminate a problem arising in a device, said online support method comprising the steps of:

providing a user of the device with a specific form that enables the user to input and transmit

information with regard to the problem (col. 3, lines 32-45); and providing the user of the device

with support information, which is prepared in advance for elimination of the problem, prior to

the transmission (col. 3, lines 32-45); wherein the form is used to initiate an email exchange (col.

3, lines 53-65) and comprises a part for the that asks the user to input first information required

to identify the device and a part for second information required to specify the working status of

the device (A user can select a device in Figure 4 and then specify working status) and a part for

enabling the user to input an email address (See response to arguments for explanation); and

obtaining browsing record information, which represents a user's browsing record of the support

information, in addition to the information input into the specific form (Figure 4, the "Usual

Destinations" box in the top right of the browser is a user browsing record.); however Grewal

does not explicitly teach the one specific form that allows a user to input device identity,

working status and email address and Grewal does not explicitly teach the transmission of a

browsing record attached with the information input into the form.

        Sullivan teaches an online support method that gives online support to eliminate a

problem arising in a device, said online support method comprising the steps of: (a) providing a

user of the device with a specific form that enables the user to input and transmit information

with regard to the problem (col. 7, line 59-col. 8, line 4, see also Figure 6 for specific form and Figure 4 for flow chart); (b) providing the user of the device with support information, which is prepared in advance for elimination of the problem, wherein the specific form comprises a first part that asks the user to input first information generally required for analysis of the problem (Figure 6 and step 66 of Figure 4), and a second part that enables the user to input arbitrary information (Figure 6 and step 68 of Figure 4); (c) obtaining browsing record information, which represents a user's browsing record of the support information, in addition to information input into the specific form (col. 12, lines 8-18); and (d) transmitting the information input into the specific forms and the browsing record information attached to the specific form and the to an online support operator (Figure 12); however Sullivan does not explicitly teach the provision of the support information before providing the form as part of Sullivan's main embodiment.

Sullivan does teach a system in which support information can be provided before any form is filled out (col. 1, lines 54-61).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Sullivan's main embodiment for providing online help with the teachings of Sullivan regarding online support information before any form is input because an FAQ or support notes could solve a user's problems with minimal effort by the user (col. 1, lines 54-61).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Grewal regarding the provision of online support information with a form with the teachings of Sullivan regarding a more specific online

form because Sullivan's form allows an online help provider to have more specific information about a problem.

6.   As to claim 2, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the support information is provided in response to each selecting instruction given by the user (col. 3, lines 32-45).

7.   As to claim 3, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the specific form also asks the user to input information regarding the individual user (col. 3, lines 15-26).

8.   As to claim 4, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the specific form also asks the user to input information regarding an operation carried out by the user to eliminate the problem (Figure 6).

9.   As to claim 5, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the specific form asks the user to input information regarding a user's browsing record of the support information provided in advance (Figure 4).

10.   As to claim 9, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 8, wherein the first information required to identify the device includes a model name of the device (Figure 4).

11.   As to claim 10, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 8, wherein the second information required to specify the working status of the device identifies an application program activated on the device when the problem arises (Figure 6).

12.   As to claim 11, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 8, wherein the device comprises a storage unit in which information representing the working status

of the device is stored and second information required to specify the working status of the device comprises information that allows an access to the storage unit (Figure 6).

13. As to claim 15, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the form is offered to a user without providing a result (col. 3, lines 53-65).

14. As to claim 24, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 16, wherein the device carries out either of processing and generation of digital data, and the specific form asks the user to input at least information that is required to specify a result of either of the processing and the generation carried out by the device (Figure 6).

15. As to claim 2, Sullivan the online support method of claim 1, wherein said step (b) provides the support information in response to each selecting instruction given by the user (col. 8, lines 5-47).

16. As to claim 3, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein the specific form also asks the user to input information regarding the user (Figure 6, information about the user's problem is information regarding the user).

17. As to claim 4, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein the specific form also asks the user to input information regarding an operation carried out by the user to eliminate the problem (col. 8, lines 5-64).

18. As to claim 5, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein the specific form asks the user to input information regarding a user's browsing record of the support information provided in advance (col. 8, lines 48-63, it can only be assumed that by "asking" the applicant means automatically collecting because that is the only scenario described in the applicant's specification at paragraph 16).

19.   As to claim 9, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein the first

information required to identify the device includes at least one of a model name of the device,

an ID number allocated to the individual device, information that identifies a driver program for

driving the device, and information that identifies an operating system on which the driver

programs runs (Figures 5-6).

20.   As to claim 10, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein the

second information required to specify the working status of the device includes at least one of

information that identifies an application program activated on the device when the problem

arises, information that identifies an application program used for driving the device and

specifies data transmitted to the device, and information that specifies a communication

environment of the device (Figures 5-6).

21.   As to claim 11, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein the device

comprises a storage unit configured to store specific information representing the working status

of the device, and the second information required to specify the working status of the device

comprises information that allows access to the storage unit (Figure 5-6).

22.   As to claim 15, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein said step

(a) enables the specific form to be offered to the user without said step (b), in response to an

instruction given by the user (Figures 5-6).

23.   As to claims 12-14, 16-23, and 30-35, they feature limitations from claims 1-4 and 6 and

are rejected for the same reasons as claims 1-6.

24.   Claims 25-26 and 36-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

U.S. Patent Number 6,691,159 to Grewal et al. in view of U.S. Patent Number 6,477,531 to

Sullivan et al. in further view of U.S. Patent Number 6,119,247 to House et al..

25.   As to claim 25 and 36, the Grewal- Sullivan combination teaches the method of claim 6,

however the Grewal- Sullivan combination does not explicitly teach image data showing the

inputs.

House teaches image data showing the inputs (col. 4, lines 28-44).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the

time of the invention to combine the teachings of the Grewal- Sullivan combination regarding

online help with the teachings of House regarding image data because displaying the image helps

a remote user debug a problem (House, col. 4, lines 28-44).

26.   As to claims 26 and 37, the Grewal- Sullivan combination teaches the method of claim 6,

however the Grewal- Sullivan combination does not explicitly teach image data showing the

outputs.

House teaches image data showing the outputs (col. 4, lines 28-44).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the

time of the invention to combine the teachings of the Grewal- Sullivan combination regarding

online help with the teachings of House regarding image data because displaying the image helps

a remote user debug a problem (House, col. 4, lines 28-44).

27.   Claim 38 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent

Number 6,691,159 to Grewal et al. in view of U.S. Patent Number 6,477,531 to Sullivan et al. in

further view of U.S. Patent Number 6,629,134 to Hayward et al..

28.   Claims 38 features the same limitations as claim 1 with the addition of a display window that displays the working a status of a device. As pointed out previously, the Grewal- Sullivan combination makes obvious the features of claim 1; however the Grewal- Sullivan combination does not explicitly teach a display window that displays the working status of a device.

Hayward teaches a recording medium in which a program is recorded, wherein said program functions to drive a device and causes a link to an upper-layered online support Web page (col. 3, lines 54-64), which does not depend upon a model of the device nor a problem, out of support Web pages that provide a client with support information to eliminate a problem arising in the device, to be shown in at least one of a setting window that allows a user of the device to specify settings of the device and a display window that displays a working status of the device (col. 5, line 58-col. 6, line 57).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of the Grewal- Sullivan combination regarding online support with the teachings of Harward regarding the display of a working status because a display provides better support than text alone.

Conclusion

29.   The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. U.S. Paten Number 6,539,499 to Stedman also shows an email exchange in which an administrator can view browsing history and other information about a problem on a network (col. 5, line 60-col. 6, line 21).

30.   **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time

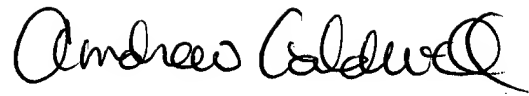policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

31.   A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE

MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO

MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after

the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period

will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37

CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing

date of this final action.

32.   Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to Douglas B. Blair whose telephone number is (571) 272-3893.

The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00am-5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, Andrew Caldwell can be reached on (571) 272-3868. The fax phone number for the

organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent

Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications

may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished

applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR

system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR

system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

ANDREW CALDWELL
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

Douglas Blair

DBB